

ALTERNATIVE D

Goal

Alternative D emphasizes wildlife and fisheries habitat enhancement, wilderness and recreational values, cultural resource management, and watershed protection.

Wildlife and fisheries habitat would be managed for optimum species populations and diversity as well as to provide for future habitat integrity. This would be accomplished by developing habitat management plans, doing vegetative manipulation, excluding grazing on critical aquatic and riparian areas and improving ecological range condition. Areas of critical wildlife habitat would have allotment management plans developed to benefit primarily wildlife.

Cultural resource objectives would be reached through cultural resource management plans, protective withdrawals and National Register designations.

Livestock use adjustments and exclusions would be used to protect watersheds. Watershed activity plans would be completed.

Minerals Management

Non-energy solid mineral leasing would be permitted on 598,581 acres with standard stipulations. A total of 44,378 acres would be closed to solid mineral leasing.

Under Alternative D, a total of 313,799 acres would be open for oil and gas and geothermal leasing with seasonal and standard stipulations; another 40,709 acres would be open with NSO restrictions. Approximately 38,895 acres would be closed to oil and gas and geothermal leasing.

A total of 329,273 acres would be open for the location of mining claims and managed under the surface management regulations. A total of 58,188 acres would be closed to mineral entry.

Mineral material disposals would be permitted on 301,583 acres of the PRA. However, 85,878 acres would be closed to mineral material disposal.

Lands

Under Alternative D, 8,124 acres of public land would be available for disposal through land exchanges (See Map 5). The objective of the land exchange program would be acquisition of private and State lands and consolidation of public lands to enhance wildlife and riparian management.

A total of 256,357 acres of public land would be retained for multiple use management. BLM would attempt to acquire 11,647 acres of private land and 9,880 acres of State land through exchanges for public lands.

A total of 222 acres of public land would be retained and used under land use permits/leases.

Right-of-Way development with standard stipulations would occur on 178,916 acres. Special restrictions would be imposed on 40,231 acres. A total of 45,334 acres would be closed to right-of-way development.

Range Management

Under this Alternative, 36,969 acres of midseral and early seral condition range would be improved to late seral condition. Approximately 2,544 acres of vegetation in a downward trend would be reversed.

Proposed improvements include 44 springs, 18 water catchments, 14 reservoirs, 82 miles of fence, and 1,500 acres of disturbed rangeland restored, for a current estimated total cost of \$391,600.

In both the short and long-term, adjustments to the active preference (upward/downward) will be made based on results from approved range monitoring procedures, numbers of acres/AUM, general observations and professional judgment. The initial stocking level of 28,840 AUMs is a 17 percent increase from the 5-year average use and a 1 percent decrease from the current active preference. The long-term stocking level would be 29,519 AUMs.

Grazing adjustments would be made over the 15-year life of the resource management plan. These would occur only after conducting monitoring studies and coordinating with the affected users.

Livestock grazing would be excluded from 1,810 acres of fenced campground, riparian areas, one ACEC, and five RNAs. The grazing preference on 14 allotments would be reduced by 125 AUMs because of these exclusions (refer to Appendix A, Table A.7).

Grazing increases resulting from range improvements would occur only if long-term monitoring indicates it to be prudent. The feasibility of project development would be handled on a case-by-case basis as activity plans are developed.

The public lands identified for disposal have grazing preference. Decreases in preference would occur whenever tracts are transferred from Federal ownership.

Changes in season of use would occur in some allotments where there was a

conflict with other resource needs. Adjusted turnout dates and/or season of use may be used to improve range condition, improve vigor of perennial vegetation and implement reductions needed to achieve management goals.

To implement this Alternative, AMPs/grazing systems would have to be developed for 114 allotments in the "Improve" category.

Wildlife

The following tables shows the eight Habitat Management Plans that would be developed under this Alternative:

TABLE 2.3
PROPOSED HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANS

Species	Area	Acreage
Elk	Garden Gap	4,363
Waterfowl/Fisheries	Oxford Slough	157
Elk/Deer	Oneida Narrows	5,085
Elk/Deer	Cheatbeck Canyon	4,477
Deer/Sage Grouse	East of Bear Lake	15,410
Elk/Deer	Wolverine Canyon	7,770
Deer/Sharp-tailed Grouse	King Creek	5,210
Deer	Downey Front	3,487

Under Alternative D, projected populations of 7,243 deer and 554 elk would be supported on winter ranges on public lands.

Approximately 4,497 acres of big game winter/spring range, about 3,909 acres of sage grouse seasonal ranges, and about 195 acres of nongame habitat would be improved through joint range/wildlife HMP and AMP development. Bitterbrush plantings would be done on 597 acres of winter range showing a downward trend.

The ease of big game movement and hazard reduction would be improved through modification of about 6 miles of existing fence.

Waterfowl habitat in riparian areas would be improved through an improved grazing management system. Thirteen goose nesting platforms are proposed for the Bear River and Chesterfield Reservoir.

Water supply would be improved for sage grouse and nongame species on the Bear Lake Plateau areas by installing two 500-gallon guzzlers. Fencing would be used to construct individual exclosures around the guzzlers.

NSO restrictions for oil, gas, and geothermal leasing, exploration, and development would apply to 40,709 acres of crucial wildlife habitat. Seasonal restrictions on another 130,000 acres would;district these activities to times of the year when wildlife use is minimal.

Restrictions on ORV use to protect wildlife are primarily snowmobile closures or vehicle limitations to designated routes on big game winter ranges.

Cancellations of all grazing privileges in the Stump Creek ACEC is proposed under this Alternative. All forage would be reserved for wintering elk and deer. All fences that hinder elk movement in the Stump Creek area would be removed.

Recreation and Visual Resources

Alternative D would continue with present ORV designations contained in the Pocatello ORV Designation Plan (08/15/80) and new designations added in the Caribou-Bear Lakes areas (refer to Map 16). ORV user designations in the Pocatello and Blackfoot River SRMAs would be determined by future activity plans. These SRMAs would total 64,532 acres.

Approximately 22,676 acres would be open to wheeled ORV use while 208,645 acres would be open to over-snow ORV use. BLM would limit wheeled ORVs to existing roads and trails on 193,833 acres and over-snow ORVs on big game winter range on 33,010 acres. A total of 47,972 acres would be closed to wheeled ORV use and 22,826 acres would be closed to snowmobiles to protect wintering big game.

Eight new recreation sites would be developed under this Alternative (refer to Map 16).

The following visual resources management designations would be made: Class I, 11,338 acres; Class II, 115,055 acres; Class III, 125,266 acres; and Class IV, 12,822 acres. No interim classes would remain.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Under Alternatives D, the Stump Creek, Downey Watershed, and Travertine Park ACECs would be designated totaling 4,506 acres of public land. (See Appendix B and Map 16.) The three ACECs would be protected by restrictions on mining, grazing, and ORVs.

Research and Natural Areas (RNA)

Under Alternatives D, RNA designations would be made for seven areas, totaling 1,494 acres. These seven areas are: Cheatbeck Canyon, Dairy Hollow, Formation Cave, Oneida Narrows, Pine Gap, Robbers Roost Creek, and Travertine Park (See Map 16). The seven RNAs would be protected by restrictions on mining, grazing, and ORVs.

Cultural Resources Management

NSO restrictions would be imposed on 20 acres of Historic Railroad Grades, 640 acres in Blackrock Canyon and 11,600 acres of Historic Trail Segments.

Forest Management

Under Alternative D, approximately 12,447 acres of commercial forest land would be available for selective and shelterwood cutting. An additional 808 acres of predominately lodgepole pine would be available for timber harvest under a clearcut cutting system.

Approximately 28,210 acres of woodland would be available for the production of woodland products: firewood, posts/poles, and Christmas trees.

Until a decision is made on the Petticoat Peak and Worm Creek WSAs, 2,559 acres of commercial forest land of predominately Douglas-fir would be placed in a deferred category. An additional 5,069 acres of woodland would also be place in a deferred category for the same reason.

There would be 1,279 acres withdrawn from the timber base as a result of Timber Productivity Capability Classification Inventory conducted in the District in 1984. This acreage was withdrawn because of low productivity, unstable slopes, and/or problem with regeneration.

A maximum of the 300 acres of Juniper cutting for watershed improvement in the Soda Springs area under this Alternative.

Riparian and Water Quality (Refer to Appendix C)

Under Alternative D, 34.15 miles of riparian stream would be improved in condition. A total of 59.64 miles of riparian habitat would be maintained in its present good to fair condition. Riparian pastures would be created through construction of 13 mile of fence and utilization by livestock would be limited to 50 percent on key riparian species. No riparian habitat would deteriorate under this Alternative. Approximately 18 miles of riparian stream habitat, 40 acres of wetlands and 3.3 acres of Bear Lake shoreline would be sold or exchanged (refer to Map 5).

Soils and Watershed Management

Erosion monitoring would occur on 20 allotments (refer to Appendix H). Approximately 867 acres of agriculture trespass lands would be restored to native range.

There would be 948 acres that would continue to be closed to livestock grazing (unallotted No. 0036) in Oneida Narrows and 224 acres of disturbed lands reclaimed on Woodall Mountain and Trail Creek. Approximately 1,360 acres of ashy soils would be protected from surface disturbance and 300 acres of Juniper cutting would occur to increase understory production. Approximately 1,350 acres (steep slopes) in Oneida Narrows in grazing allotments 4062, 4071, 4073, 4115, 4310 and 4357 will be monitored for soil erosion.

Fire Management

Full suppression fire management guidelines would be followed on 253,143 acres. Under this Alternative, 11,338 acres would be managed under the suppression restriction to maintain wilderness quality. All developed recreation sites and proposed development sites would also have suppression restrictions, including retardant, no heavy equipment, and no fireline explosives. Prescribed burns for vegetation manipulation would not be conducted.

Access

Under Alternative D, public access will be obtained on approximately 37,300 acres of public land (see Map 8).

ALTERNATIVE E

Goal

Alternative E emphasizes mineral development on the public lands. The objective is to manage the Federal mineral estate to allow optimum exploration and development, while minimizing unnecessary impacts to other resources.

This objective would be met by imposing the least restrictive stipulations of any of the Alternatives on mineral leasing activities, leaving areas open to leasing, and opening areas that are currently closed to mineral location.

Minerals Management

Non-energy solid mineral leasing would be allowed on 614,578 acres under standard stipulations. A total of 28,381 acres would be closed to solid mineral leasing.

Under Alternative E, about 332,587 acres would be open for oil and gas and geothermal mineral leasing with seasonal and standard stipulations. Another 28,921 acres would have NSO restrictions. A total of 31,895

acres would be closed to oil and gas and geothermal leasing. No lands would be closed to fluid mineral leasing.

A total of 330,250 acres would be open for the location of mining claims. A total of 57,211 acres would be closed to mineral entry.

A total of 313,788 acres would be available for the disposal of mineral materials and 73,673 acres would be closed.

Lands

Under Alternative E, 17,585 acres of public land would be available for transfer from Federal ownership through public sales, Recreation and Public Purposes Act, or exchanges (See Map 6). Included in this total are 13,724 acres that would be transferred solely through exchange.

A total of 246,896 acres of public land would be retained for multiple use management. BLM would attempt to acquire 994 acres of private land and 8,760 acres of State land through exchange for public lands.

A total of 222 acres of public land would be retained and used under existing land use permits/leases.

Right-of-Way development with standard stipulations would occur on 221,521 acres. Special restrictions would be imposed on 31,622 acres. A total of 11,338 acres would be closed to right-of-way development.

Range Management

Under Alternative E, 11,240 acres of midseral and early seral condition range would be improved to late seral condition. Approximately 2,544 acres of vegetation in a downward trend would be reversed.

Proposed range improvements include 11,240 acres of brush control, 240 acres of seeding, 32 springs, 12 water catchments, 10 reservoirs, 2 cattleguards, 10 miles of fence, and 800 acres of disturbed rangeland restored, for a current estimated total cost of \$237,240.

In both the short and long-term, adjustments to the active preference (upward/downward) would be made based on results from approved range monitoring procedures, numbers of acres/AUM, general observations and professional judgment. The initial stocking level would be approximately 29,969 AUMs and the long-term stocking level would be about 34,276 AUMs.

Grazing adjustments would be made over the 15-year life of the Pocatello RMP. These would occur only after conducting monitoring studies and coordinating with the affected users.

Livestock grazing would be excluded from 1,810 acres of fenced campground, riparian areas, one ACEC, and five RNAs. The grazing preference on 14 allotments would be reduced by 125 AUMs because of these exclusions (refer to Appendix A, Table A.7).

Grazing increases resulting from range improvements would occur only if long-term monitoring indicates it to be prudent.

The public lands identified for disposal have grazing preference. When transferred out of Federal ownership, grazing preference would be decreased. Appendix A, Table A.2, gives detailed information on disposal category lands.

Adjusted turnout dates and/or season of use would be used to improve range condition, improve vigor of perennial vegetation and implement reductions needed to achieve management goals.

To implement this Alternative, AMPs/grazing systems would have to be developed for 114 allotments in the "Improve" category.

Wildlife Management

Two Habitat Management Plans would be developed (see Table 2.4):

TABLE 2.4
PROPOSED HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLANS

<u>Species</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Acreage</u>
Deer/Sage Grouse	East of Bear Lake	15,410
Deer/Sharp-tailed Grouse	King Creek	5,210

Approximately 4,131 acres of big game winter/spring range; about 3,215 acres of sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse seasonal ranges; and about 38 acres of nongame habitat would be improved. Bitterbrush plantings would be done to improve approximately 417 acres of big game winter range.

Alternative E would provide winter range for 7,251 deer and 555 elk on public lands.

Six miles of fence would be modified to improve big game movement.

Six goose nesting platforms would be built on riparian parcels along the Bear River.

Two 500-gallon guzzlers would be developed on the Bear Lake Plateau. Exclosures would be constructed around the guzzlers.

Approximately 22,344 acres would be closed to snowmobiles on big game winter ranges.

Recreation and Visual Resources

Alternative E would be the same as Alternative C and would continue with present ORV designations contained in the Pocatello ORV Designation Plan (08/15/80) and new designations added in the Caribou-Bear Lakes areas (refer to Map 16). ORV user designations in the Pocatello and Blackfoot River SRMAs would be determined by future activity plans. These SRMAs would total 64,532 acres.

A total of 198,350 acres would be open to wheeled ORV use and 209,127 acres would be open to over-snow ORV use. BLM would limit wheeled ORVs to existing roads and trails on 65,811 acres and over-snow ORVs on big game winter range on 33,010 acres. A total of 320 acres would be closed to wheeled ORV use and 22,344 acres would be closed to snowmobiles to protect wintering big game.

Fourteen new recreation sites would be developed under this Alternative (refer to Map 16).

The following visual resources management designations would be made: Class I, 11,338 acres; Class II, 27,800 acres; Class III, 51,960 acres; and Class IV, 173,383 acres.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)

Under Alternatives E, the Stump Creek, Downey Watershed, and Travertine Park ACECs would be designated totaling 4,506 acres of public land. (See Appendix B and Map 16.) The three ACECs would be protected by restrictions on mining, grazing, and ORVs.

Research and Natural Areas (RNA)

Under Alternatives D, RNA designations would be made for seven areas, totaling 1,494 acres. These seven areas are: Cheatbeck Canyon, Dairy Hollow, Formation Cave, Oneida Narrows, Pine Gap, Robbers Roost Creek, and Travertine Park (See Map 16). The seven RNAs would be protected by restrictions on mining, grazing, and ORVs.

Cultural Resources Management

NSO restrictions would be imposed on 5 acres of Historic Railroad Grades, 10 acres in Blackrock Canyon and 40 acres of Historic Trail Segments.

Forest Management

Under Alternative E, approximately 9,949 acres of commercial forest land would be available for selective and shelterwood cutting. An additional 808 acres of predominately lodgepole pine would be available for timber harvest under a clearcut cutting system.

Approximately 27,106 acres of woodland would be available for the production of woodland products: firewood, posts/poles, and Christmas trees.

Until a decision is made on the Petticoat Peak and Worm Creek WSAs, 2,559 acres of commercial forest land of predominately Douglas-fir would be placed in a deferred category. An additional 5,069 acres of woodland would also be place in a deferred category for the same reason.

There would be 1,279 acres withdrawn from the timber base as a result of Timber Productivity Capability Classification Inventory conducted in the District in 1984. This acreage was withdrawn because of low productivity, unstable slopes, and/or problem with regeneration.

A maximum of the 600 acres of Juniper cutting for watershed improvement in the Soda Springs area under this Alternative.

Riparian and Water Quality

Under Alternative E, 6.75 miles of stream would be improved in condition. A total of 17.10 miles of riparian stream would be sold or exchanged (refer to Map 6). About 83.84 miles of riparian habitat would be maintained in its existing good to fair condition. With this Alternative 3.20 miles of stream would be expected to deteriorate from its current condition. Riparian pastures would be created through 7.25 miles of fencing with this Alternative.

Soils and Watershed Management

Erosion monitoring would occur on 20 allotments (refer to Appendix H) to determine how much actual erosion is occurring. Approximately 867 acres of agriculture trespass lands would be restored to native range.

Approximately 948 acres that would continue to be closed to grazing (unallotted No.0036) in Oneida Narrows and 600 acres of disturbed lands would be reclaimed on Woodall Mountain and Trail Creek. Approximately 360 acres of ashy soil would be protected from surface disturbance and 600 acres of Juniper cutting would occur to increase understory production.

Approximately 400 acres (steep slopes) in Oneida Narrows in grazing allotments 4062 and 4073 will be monitored for soil erosion.

Fire Management

Full suppression fire management guidelines would be followed on 253,143 acres. All existing recreation sites and proposed development sites would have suppression restrictions including no retardant, no heavy equipment, and no fireline explosives. Under this Alternative, 11,338 acres would be managed under the suppression restrictions to maintain wilderness quality. No other areas would be placed in the restricted category except as mentioned in the Standard Operating Procedures (Part I). Under this Alternative, 11,240 acres would be burned for vegetation manipulation.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

The various Alternatives discussed in this chapter would have differing impacts to the environment. A summary comparison of these impacts is presented in Table 2.5.

TABLE 2.5
COMPARATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<u>ENERGY & MINERALS</u>					
LEASABLE, FLUID					
Leased w/standard/seasonal stipulations	No Change	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Decrease (moderate)	Increase (minor)
Leased w/NSO	No Change	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (moderate)	Decrease (minor)
Closed to Leasing	No Change	No Change	Decrease (minor)	No Change	Decrease (minor)
LEASABLE, NON-ENERGY					
Closed to Leasing	No Change	Increase (minor)	No Change	Increase (minor)	No Change
LOCATABLE					
Open to Claim Location	No Change	No Change	No Change	Decrease (minor)	No Change
Closed to Claim Location	No Change	No Change	No Change	Increase (minor)	No Change
SALABLE					
Open to Mineral Material Use	No Change	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)
Closed to Mineral Material Use	No Change	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)
<u>LANDS</u>					
Acres Retained	Decrease (moderate)	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (moderate)	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (minor)
Acres Disposed	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)

TABLE 2.5
COMPARATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<u>LIVESTOCK GRAZING</u>					
<u>ECOLOGICAL RANGE</u>					
<u>CONDITION</u>					
PNC	No Change	Increase (minor)	No Change	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)
Late Seral	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)	No Change	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)
Mid Seral	No Change	Decrease (minor)	No Change	Decrease (moderate)	Decrease (minor)
Early Seral	No Change	Decrease (minor)	No Change	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (minor)
Disturbed	Decrease (minor)	No Change	No Change	No Change	Decrease (minor)
LIVESTOCK AUMs	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)	Increase (moderate)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)
<u>WILDLIFE HABITAT</u>					
<u>NUMBERS</u>					
Elk	No Change	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)
Deer	No Change	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)
<u>BIG GAME</u>					
<u>WINTER HABITAT</u>					
Satisfactory	No Change	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)
<u>SAGE GROUSE</u>					
<u>HABITAT</u>					
Satisfactory	No Change	Increase (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)
<u>SHARP-TAILED GROUSE</u>					
<u>HABITAT</u>					
Satisfactory	No Change	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)	Increase (minor)

TABLE 2.5
COMPARATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C	Alternative D	Alternative E
<u>RECREATION</u>					
<u>RECREATION SITES</u>					
Developed	No Change	Increase (moderate)	Increase (major)	Increase (moderate)	Increase (major)
<u>ORV DESIGNATIONS</u>					
Open	No Change	Decrease (major)	No Change	Decrease (major)	No Change
Closed	No Change	Increase (major)	No Change	Increase (major)	No Change
Limited	No Change	Increase (major)	No Change	Increase (major)	No Change
<u>CULTURAL RESOURCES</u>					
Sites Protected	Increased (minor)	Increase (minor)	No Change	Increase (major)	No Change
<u>FOREST MANAGEMENT</u>					
Commercial Forest Land Available	No Change	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (minor)
<u>RIPARIAN MILES</u>					
Improved	No Change	Increase (moderate)	Decrease (major)	Increase (major)	Increase (minor)
Maintain	No Change	Decrease (minor)	Decrease (major)	Decrease (major)	Decrease (minor)
Deteriorate	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
<u>SOILS</u>					
<u>ACRES</u>					
Protected	No Change	Increase (minor)	No Change	Increase (moderate)	Increase (minor)
<u>ECONOMIC CONDITIONS</u>					
<u>INCOME (from Public Lands)</u>					
Direct & Secondary	\$3,000,700	\$3,695,900	\$3,657,500	\$3,395,900	\$3,657,500
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>					
Positions Generated	186	218	218	205	214
<u>ACCESS</u>					
Acres obtained due to access	No Change	37,300 (moderate increase)	No Change	No Change	No Change